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be doing this by the federal government in a very short period of time anyway. The sixth area is absentee ballots, and the bill eliminates language allowing persons to request an absentee ballot for the general election on the primary election absentee ballot envelope. This practice caused concern because ballots might be sent to a person at an address that was no longer valid or you could end up sending two ballots to one person. And, finally, the last area that we looked at was recounts. Currently, the procedures for recounting ballots are the same as those used for counting ballots on election day. In other words, if your county hand-counts ballots, they recount by hand-counting. If they are counted by machine, then they are recounted by machine. But sometimes in certain precincts there is still a tie vote, and so this...or a questionable vote, and so this provides for a second recount but it would be done in the same manner as the original recount was done. Right now that second recount is done by hand in every county. And it was felt by the task force that this is just asking for trouble. You should do it in the same manner in which it was done in both the count and the recount. And the task force was concerned that Nebraska's current recounting procedure may run afoul of the U.S. Supreme Court decision in Bush versus Gore, where the court applied an equal protection standard to the recount process in Florida. This amendment will help eliminate any equal protection concerns. With that, I'd like to stop and answer questions and offer an explanation of the committee amendment and thank the Government Committee for choosing this as...

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN: One minute.

SENATOR SCHIMEK: ...a priority bill. I think it's important that we pass it this year and that we have it in place for the next...for this year's elections. Thank you, Mr. President.

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN: Thank you, Senator. You are recognized to open on the committee amendments. (AM2620, Legislative Journal page 569.)

SENATOR SCHIMEK: Thank you, Mr. President and members. The committee amendments make three changes to the bill. First, it